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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAJ-01 OES-03 SP-02 AID-05

EB-07 NSC-05 RSC-01 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01

OMB-01 CEA-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 COME-00 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 NEA-09 H-01 PM-03 DODE-00 L-02 NIC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5948

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH PRESS REACTIONS TO USSR CANCELLATION OF
U.S. TRADE AGREEMENT

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ALL SECTORS OF FRENCH PRESS
CONTINUING TO GIVE PROMINENT TREATMENT TO IMPLICATIONS
SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENT CANCELLATION SOVIET TRADE AGREE-
MENT WHICH IS GENERALLY VIEWED AS A SIGNIFICANT, ALTHOUGH
NOT NECESSARILY FATAL, SETBACK TO DETENTE; AS A SIGN OF
GROWING PROBLEMS FOR BREZHNEV'S POLICIES IN THE KREMLIN;
AND AS A DISTINCT CHALLENGE TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S
FOREIGN POLICY STRUCTURE. THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY
L'HUMANITE ON JANUARY 16 PINNED RESPONSIBILITY THIS
SITUATION ON U.S. "AGGRESSIVENESS" AND ON JANUARY 17
BROADENED THE SCOPE OF SPECULATION ON COMMUNIST REACTIONS
BY PUBLISHING A HARSH JOINT DECLARATION OF 20 EUROPEAN
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COMMUNIST PARTIES CRITICIZING THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS

ON POSSIBLE USE OF FORCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. END
SUMMARY.

2. INITIAL AFP REACTION, CITING "INFORMED" FRENCH SOURCES, DESCRIBED SOVIET CANCELLATION TRADE AGREEMENT AS "SEVERE BLOW " SEEMINGLY AIMED AT SECRETARY KISSINGER'S DETENTE POLICIES, BUT ACTUALLY DIRECTED MORE AT THE U.S. CONGRESS. AFP SUPPORTED THIS ARGUMENT BY REFERRING TO VIRTUALLY SIMULTANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENT RESUMPTION OF SALT NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA AND CONCLUDED THAT MAIN QUESTION WAS WHETHER SECRETARY COULD GET CONGRESS TO RE-EXAMINE ITS TRADE LEGISLATION POSITION.

3. AUTHORITATIVE LE MONDE JANUARY 16 TOOK MORE PESSIMISTIC LINE. LE MONDE'S AMALRIC REPORTED FROM MOSCOW THAT NON-APPLICATION OF THE US-USSR TRADE AGREEMENT IS "FURTHER INDICATION DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN U.S. AND USSR," NOTING THAT MOSCOW PRESS IS BLAMING THE SITUATION ON WORSENING ATMOSPHERE RESULTING FROM KISSINGER STATEMENTS CONCERNING POSSIBLE U.S. INTERVENTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ON MOVEMENTS OF AMERICAN NAVY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. LE MONDE JANUARY 16 EDITORIAL RATHER SOURLY NOTES THAT KREMLIN LEADERS HAVE PERHAPS REALIZED THAT "THE POWERFUL AMERICAN SOCIETY IS NOT IN A POSITION TO BRING THEM ALL THE CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH THEY EXPECTED, AND THAT THE GAME IS NOT WORTH THE CANDLE." LE MONDE CONCLUDED THAT "THE MORE RIGID FORCES IN THE KREMLIN ARE NOW RAISING THEIR VOICES."

4. CENTRIST FIGARO'S (YVES CUAU) JANUARY 16 ARGUED THAT REJECTION BY MOSCOW OF 1972 COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH U.S. DOES NOT YET MEAN THE END OF DETENTE BETWEEN THE SUPER POWERS. HOWEVER, "A WHOLE PART OF THIS POLICY HAS CRUMBLLED" AND "IT IS A BITTER FAILURE FOR HENRY KISSINGER AND LEONID BREZHNEV." MOREOVER, "THE RENUNCIATION OF THE AGREEMENT LARGELY CONFIRMS THE RUMORS CONCERNING BREZHNEV'S HEALTH AND THE START OF A BEHIND-THE-SCENES BATTLE FOR HIS SUCCESSION. FOR KISSINGER THE FAILURE IS NEARLY AS SERIOUS, SINCE HE IS LOSING A GREAT DEAL OF HIS INTERNATIONAL CREDIBILITY." ON JANUARY 17, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FIGARO CARRIES MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT'S SPECULATION THAT THE BREAK-UP OF AMERICAN-SOVIET TRADE AGREEMENT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN ISOLATED PHENOMENON BUT FITS INTO WORLD CONTEXT. IN THE SAME EDITION RAYMOND ARON EDITORIALIZES THAT SITUATION REFLECTS THE "LIMITS OF DETENTE."

5. CENTER-LEFT QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS TOOK SIMILAR LINE, NOTING THAT "ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO WHICH THE TWO SUPER

POWERS CONTROLLED THE UNIVERSE WAS EXCESSIVE." IT ASSUMES WORLD WILL NOT "EXPLODE" AS RESULT, BUT THAT RISKS ARE INCREASED BY DETERIORATING COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE SUPER POWERS. PARIS FINANCIAL DAILY LES ECHOS TAKES THE MOST PRAGMATIC LINE, EMPHASIZING THE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES WHICH ARE LIKELY TO RESULT FROM STRAINED US-USSR COMMERCIAL TIES FOR EUROPE.

6. L'HUMANITE, THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S ORGAN, CONFINED ITSELF JANUARY 16 TO BITING COMMENT BLAMING U.S.

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"AGGRESSIVENESS" AS BASIC REASON FOR MOSCOW'S DECISION.
ON JANUARY 17 L'HUMANITE CONTINUED THIS THEME AND
PROMINENTLY CARRIED A HARSH JOINT DECLARATION OF 20

WEST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES CONDEMNING THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS ON POSSIBLE USE OF FORCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE DECLARATION SHARPLY DENOUNCES AMERICAN IMPERIALISM IN VIRTUALLY COLD WAR TERMS. WIDELY CROSS-REPORTED IN FRENCH PRESS, THE DECLARATION CALLS ON WORKERS TO BAR AMERICAN ADVENTURISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST, TO PREVENT WESTERN EUROPE'S BECOMING A REGION OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND TO REASSERT THE RIGHT OF "OUR PEOPLE" TO DECIDE ON AND BATTLE FOR THEIR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DESTINY.

7. THE EFFECT OF THE CP'S DECLARATION SO FAR HAS BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO WIDEN AND RE-ENFORCE FRENCH PRESS SPECULATION ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR DETENTE. FIGARO ALSO IMMEDIATELY POINTED OUT THAT THE STRONG SUPPORT OF THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY FOR THIS JOINT STATEMENT CANNOT HELP BUT CONTRIBUTE TO DETERIORATING FRENCH SOCIALIST-COMMUNIST RELATIONS AND WILL PLACE THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY IN SHARPER OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT.
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